

**Senate Select Committee on School Safety Hearing on
“Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity Discrimination and School Safety”**

Plummer Park- Fiesta Hall, West Hollywood

October 3, 2002

Testimony of Sarah Stuebner

Hello my name is Sarah. I am 18 years old and graduated from Clovis High School in 2002. I have experienced all forms of harassment and discrimination in school, from verbal and emotional to extreme violence which I never reported because I feared my parents would find out that I am gay and kick me out of the house because of it.

Once, my girlfriend and I kissed and an administrator called us into her office, because of it. My girlfriend got Saturday school and I got yelled at. Yet heterosexual couples are never reprimanded for their actions however far more explicit.

I have had my teachers join their students in the mocking of many lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and pansexual students, including me. Throughout 11th grade I had to sit in classroom seats with homophobic slurs written all over them, and my teacher wouldn't do anything about it. I have been hospitalized because I was beat so bad for walking into the girls' bathroom. In 2001, I was even beaten and raped in the bathroom, during class, by two boys from my class who thought they were doing me a favor by thinking they were turning me straight. So I laid there on the cold floor in pain and when I finally got up the courage to go back to class my teacher yelled at me for taking such a long time, and sent me to my learning director, where he called my mother and she yelled at me. Much much more has happened to me but there is not enough time to tell you everything that I have experienced.

About a week and a half ago, my mother and father found out I am gay -- Monday, September 23rd of this year, to be exact. I was kicked out because of it. If I had reported what had happened to me in high school and filed a sexual orientation discrimination complaint my family would have found out about me during school, and I would be in an even worse place than I am now. I would have had no job and no home. At least now I have a job, just nowhere to stay. I was unable to report anything for fear of my parents finding out. AB537 needs to be changed to help people like me. People need to be able to report things without fear of people finding out about them.

Thank you for taking the time to hear me.